

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 SSO-00 NSCE-00
USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-07
ARA-06 /096 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4709

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY MIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 0444

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ET, SO, UR

SUBJ: CASTRO VISIT ROUND-UP

REF: MOGADISCIO 0415

SUMMARY: ON SURFACE, PREMIER CASTRO'S MARCH 12-14 VISIT TO MOGADISCIO

WAS DEMONSTRATION AND REAFFIRMATION OF CORDIAL INTERPARTY/INTER-
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS EXISTING BETWEEN SOMALIA AND CUBA, AND AS SUCH
DID

NOT BREAK ANY NEW POLITICAL GROUND. SOME OBSERVERS BELIEVE, HOWEVER,
THAT

FORMAL ASPECTS OF VISIT, IN FACT, CAMOUFLAGED ATTEMPT BY CASTRO
TO MEDIATE SUBTERRANEAN DISPUTE BETWEEN GSDR, ON ONE SIDE, AND EPMG
AND SOVIETS ON OTHER. END SUMMARY.

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1. PUBLIC ASPECTS OF CASTRO VISIT DEMONSTRATED CONCLUSIVELY THE
CLOSE IDEOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL AFFINITY BETWEEN GSDR AND
CASTRO'S CUBA. STAGEMANAGING AND APPARENT ENTHUSIASM
SET OFF CASTRO'S VISIT SOMEWHAT FROM OTHER RECENT OFFICIAL VISITS TO
SOMALIA. AS UAUAL, SOMALI REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST PARTY (SRSP)
MILITANTS AND GOVERNMENT WORKERS WERE TRUCKED TO AIRPORT AND

OTHER CEREMONIAL STOPS FOR RITUAL DEMONSTRATIONS OF SOLIDARITY, BUT MORE PEOPLE WERE INVOLVED THIS TIME AND THERE SEEMED TO BE GENUINE SPARK OF ENTHUSIASM IN CROWDS. ALSO, CASTRO WAS PERMITTED TO SPEAK TO CAREFULLY SELECTED MASS AUDIENCE AT LEAST ONCE.

2. PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT MOHAMED SIAD BARRE AND CASTRO WERE FULL OF REVOLUTIONARY ZEAL AND VOWS TO CONTINUE COMMON FIGHT AGAINST IMPERIALISM. SIAD SET TONE OF VISIT IN HIS MARCH 12 REMARKS AT AIRPORT WHEN HE WELCOMED CASTRO TO HIS "SECOND HOME". AT MARCH 13 SOCCER MATCH, SIAD RECOUNTED STORY OF CASTRO'S VICTORY OVER "MASSIVE IMPERIALIST FORCES" ATTEMPTING TO CRUSH CUBAN REVOLUTION. HE CREDITED "UNCONDITIONAL SUPPORT OF USSR" WITH MAJOR ROLE IN THAT VICTORY. BUT CUBA HAD PASSED STAGE OF DEFENDING ITSELF, HE SAID, AND "IS NOW ENGAGED IN ASSISTING STRUGGLE OF PROGRESSIVE FORCES" IN ANGOLA AND ELSEWHERE. IN REPLY, CASTRO TOLD SPECTATORS THAT CUBA AND SOMALIA WERE "UNITED" IN FIGHT AGAINST IMPERIALISM, AND, ECHOING SIAD, THAT "CUBAN PEOPLE ARE NOT CONFINED TO THEIR BOUNDARIES BUT ARE STRUGGLING FOR INTERNATIONAL CAUSES AND THE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIALISM". AT MARCH 14 VISIT TO HALANE YOUTH CENTER, SIAD REFERRED TO "COMMON VIEWS" OF CUBA AND SOMALIA, WHILE CASTRO SAID TWO REVOLUTIONS HAD "SAME IDEOLOGY".

3. PRIVATE TALKS WERE HELD BY THE LEADERS AT SIAD'S OFFICIAL RESIDENCE. LEADERS ALSO TOOK PART IN DELEGATION-WIDE TALKS. AT LATTER, SDR WAS REPRESENTED BY SIAD, VICE PRESIDENT BRIG. GENERAL ISMAIL ALI ABOKAR, CHAIRMAN OF SRSP FOREIGN RELATIONS
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BUREAU ABDIRAHMAN AIDEED, CHAIRMAN OF SRSP ADMINISTRATIVE BUREAU IBRAHIM MEUGAGA SAMANTAR, MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE ABDIKASSIM SALAD HASSAN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ABDURAHMAN JAMA BARRE AND OTHER OFFICIALS. CUBAN SIDE WAS REPRESENTED BY CASTRO, VICE PRESIDENT AND POLITIBURO MEMBER CARLOS R. RODRIGUEZ, SECRETARY OF COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OSMANY CIENFUEGOS GORRIARAN, MINISTER OF FOOD AND INDUSTRY JOSE A. NARANJO, COMMUNIST PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER RAUL VALDES VIVO, CUBAN AMBASSADOR LUIS GONZALEZ MARTURELOS AND OTHERS.

4. AS USUAL, ONLY SKETCHY INFORMATION WAS RELEASED ON NATURE OF TALKS. ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL MEDIA, TWO SIDES DISCUSSED "RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PARTIES OF THE TWO COUNTRIES, MUTUAL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE SDR AND CUBA IN PARTICULAR AND WORLD AFFAIRS IN GENERAL". SAME MEDIA DESCRIBED TALKS AS "FRIENDLY".

5. INTERPARTY AND INTERGOVERNMENT COOPERATION UNDOUBTEDLY FIGURED IMPORTANTLY ON SIAD/CASTRO AGENDA, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE

NO INDICATION THAT ANY MAJOR NEW BILATERAL INITIATIVES WERE ENVISAGED. DIPLOMATIC OBSERVERS ARE SPECULATING, HOWEVER, THAT CASTRO'S VISIT WAS INTENDED AS FAR MORE THAN OFFICIAL COURTESY CALL. THEY BELIEVE CASTRO CAME TO MOGADISCIO TO TRY TO ASSUAGE GSDR'S CONCERN ABOUT GROWING SOVIET SUPPORT FOR ETHIOPIAN PROVISIONAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT (EPMG) AND TO MEDIATE TERRITORIAL DISPUTE BETWEEN GSDR AND EPMG. SOURCES GENERALLY AGREE THAT CASTRO DID NOT DISPEL GSDR CONCERN AND THAT HE LEFT MOGADISCIO WITHOUT GIVING SATISFACTION TO SOVIETS OR EPMG. PERSISTENT REPORTS OF GSDR DISAFFECTION FROM SOVIETS LEND CREDENCE TO THIS INTERPRETATION, BUT NO DIRECT CONFIRMATION CAN BE SUPPLIED AT THIS TIME. IF IT IS CORRECT, IT IS IMPORTANT CONFIRMATION OF GROWING POLITICAL FLUIDITY IN HORN OF AFRICA AND COULD BE SOMETHING OF TURNING POINT IN REGIONAL POLITICS. CASTRO'S SUCCESS IN MEDIATING DISPUTE WOULD EFFECTIVELY AND ANY HOPE OF AN OPENING TO ARAB WORLD AND THE WEST BY SOMALIA. HIS FAILURE, ON OTHER HAND, COULD MEAN THAT CONDITIONS FOR SIGNIFICANT CHANGES MAY

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BE MATURING. WHATEVER THE CASE, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAVE OTHER POSTS' INPUT ON REAL MEANING OF CASTRO'S PEREGRINATIONS IN REGION.

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